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MR. JUDSON'S

Anniversary Sermon.

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A

SERMON,

PREACHED

IN THE

7551.420

NEW MEETING HOUSE,

PLYMOUTH,

December 22, 1802,

Bd.

IN MEMORY

OF THE

Landing of our Ancestors,

December 22, 1620.

BY ADONIRAM JUDSON, A. M.
PASTOR OF THE THIRD CHURCH IN PLYMOUTH.

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AN

ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

2 *Corinthians*, VI. 17.

——COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM, AND BE YE SEPARATE, SAITH THE LORD, AND TOUCH NOT THE UNCLEAN THING; AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU.

OBEDIENCE to this direction would be imitating the example of our pious anceſtors, whoſe characters we are now aſſembled to commemorate. They diſcovered a remarkable ſpirit of ſelf-denial, boldneſs, and perſeverance in the cauſe of religion, to ſecure to themſelves, and to poſterity, civil and religious freedom; and God, who is infinite in goodneſs, was pleaſed to give them wiſdom and fortitude to ſurmount difficulties and dangers, and to crown their efforts with ſucceſs.

THE primary deſign of the words, applying them to the conduct of our forefathers, and conſidering

them as an addreſs to us their poſterity, may afford matter for ſerious contemplation on this occaſion.

I. The words of our text were uſed to make known God's mind or will to thoſe who enjoyed the goſpel, and the method which they were to adopt in faith and practice. They were commanded to forſake all idolatry, and all moral evil; and to diſtinguiſh themſelves in the cauſe of truth.

God had remarkably proſpered the labors of the apoſtle, in forming churches among the heathen. A number were renewed by the work of the ſpirit, and were called away from the ſervice of idols to the ſervice of the Redeemer's kingdom. They were forbidden communion and fellowſhip with the worſhippers of Baal. "For what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? And what communion hath light with darkneſs? And what concord hath Chriſt with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people." All, therefore, who believe the goſpel, and will obey God; all, who love the Lord Jeſus; all, who are deſirous of an intereſt in his

holy kingdom, come out from among them, renounce the vanity of the world, and engage in the ſervice of Chriſt, and I will receive you. In bleſſing, I will bleſs you. I will take care of the cauſe in which you are engaged. It ſhall proſper: and you ſhall overcome all evil; and "ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the LORD Almighty."

OUR text is the ſame language which God uſed to perſuade his covenant people to come out of Babylon, and return to Jeruſalem. They had been perſecuted, afflicted, and oppreſſed, about ſeventy years; and were often forbidden to worſhip the God of Iſrael.

GOD's appointed time of their redemption was come, to return to Jeruſalem, rebuild the temple, enjoy their former privileges, and worſhip the God of Zion. A number had become habituated to the evils, the vices, and the idolatry of the place, and were indiſpoſed to leave Babylon, and encounter all the hardſhips and dangers in returning to the land of promiſe; hence, God ſent Iſaiah the prophet, in his name to command them, ſaying, "depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing;" and "the LORD will go before you, and the God of Iſrael will be your rere-

ward." Take your effects, your wives, and your little ones, and forſake the wickedneſs of Babylon. Go ye to the land of promiſe. There ye ſhall enjoy civil and religious freedom; there ye ſhall repair the walls of the city; there ye ſhall rebuild the temple; there ye ſhall enjoy your former privileges. It is the will of God that you undertake, and do all theſe things. He will go before you, give you ſtrength, and defend you in the wilderneſs. He will enable you to glorify himſelf, in the enjoyment of that good land. Hence, they were directed to come out from among them, and touch no unclean thing.

THE unclean thing might comprehend all the idolatry and wickedneſs of Babylon; and Babylon is uſed, in ſcripture, to repreſent all the moral evil and ſin of this apoſtate world.

Hence—

II. THE text may be juſtly applied to our fathers, who left England and came to America. Probably they underſtood the meaning of the words, as well as many other paſſages of ſcripture of a like import, which might give them courage and ſtrength, through all their trials, in the diſcharge of duty.

BEING grievouſly oppreſſed by their native countrymen, they agreed to come out from among them, and be ſeparated from the ſurrounding evils; and go to ſome diſtant place, where they might worſhip God agreeably to the reaſonable dictates of conſcience. They firſt removed to Amſterdam in Holland, and from thence to Leyden, which was the place of their reſidence for almoſt twelve years.

IT is not my deſign to relate the troubles of the pilgrims, nor the trials which they endured from the hand of perſecution, before, and at the time of their firſt removal, and after, till they came to America. This, however, would diſcloſe a very affecting ſcene, and excite compaſſion in every benevolent mind. The riſing age may obtain juſt information, on this point, from the productions of the late Reverend Dr. Robbins and others.

WHEN God's appointed time was come, for them to ſeek an aſylum in this unknown region, they ſet apart ſeaſons for prayer and faſting, to look to God for his holy guidance and protection. In obedience to our text, and call of Divine Providence, they came out from among them, and ſailed for America; and he, who is the God of the ſea and of the dry land, brought them to

this ſhore. Here they landed. Here they kept the firſt chriſtian Sabbath. Here they ſang the praiſes of God in a ſtrange land. Here they ſuffered cold and hunger. Here they ſaw a wilderneſs before them. Here they encountered many dangers from the natives. Here they planted the firſt chriſtian church. Here they built a temple for divine worſhip. Here, and on board their ſhip, they formed their plan of government upon the true principles of liberty. Here they diſtinguiſhed themſelves in faith and practice.

They believed the goſpel ſyſtem of grace. They believed in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. They believed the total depravity of man. They believed in a renovation of heart by the Holy Spirit. They believed in the divinity of Chriſt, and his atonement, as eſſential to ſalvation. They believed the neceſſity of repentance for ſin, and faith in Chriſt, to be forgiven. They believed in the perſeverance of the ſaints. They believed in a future ſtate of eternal life and eternal death. All this appears from their records, confeſſions of faith, and articles of the church.

And, O how evident is their belief in the providence of God! They ſupplicate the throne of grace for direction. They praiſe him for repeated

deliverances, and for his ſovereign goodneſs in their preſervation.

True faith, in the ſyſtem of grace or truth, will produce chriſtian practice. Though, like other men, they had failings, yet they obtained a good report. Inſtead of being governed by a ſpirit of pride, ſelfiſhneſs, or oppreſſion, they were benevolent and kind, as brethren embarked in one common intereſt. They were upright in their councils, faithful in the diſcharge of their duty, and ſteadfaſt in the cauſe in which they were engaged. They ſtrictly obſerved all the ſocial, relative, and public duties. They were good neighbors, kind parents, and affectionate one to another, in their new ſettlement. They ſought the glory of God, and the ſalvation of ſinners, in obedience to the divine inſtitutions. They honored the Sabbath, they honored the ſanctuary, and adorned the doctrines of God our Saviour. Who can doubt the power of religion? Who can doubt their walking by faith, and not by ſight? Did they not ſeparate from evil? Did they not refuſe to touch the unclean thing? Did they not make a great ſacrifice in leaving their native homes? Did they not diſtinguiſh themſelves in the cauſe of truth? Did a bleſſing follow them? And were they not proſpered by the Holy One of Iſrael?

III. We are now come to the moſt intereſting part of our ſubject, to conſider the text as addreſſed to us their poſterity. In our day of proſperity, the unholy and the impenitent, the careleſs and the profane, ſee no propriety in the addreſs. It excites their oppoſition, and gives painful ſenſations. But the truly enlightened mind, that loves holineſs and hates ſin, feels a pleaſure in hearing the words ſpoken to the preſent, as well as to any paſt age.

We have before obſerved, that Babylon, in ſcripture, is uſed to repreſent all the ſin and moral evil in this world of apoſtacy. And do not facts teſtify that there is ſin enough, at the preſent day, to juſtify an application of the text to us? Has not vice, infidelity, and a neglect of duty, become prevalent? Have we not departed from the example of our fathers? Have we not become ſelfiſh and vain, in our opinions of the work of grace and mercy in preparing ſouls for happineſs? Are not our ways corrupt before God? Where is our faith? Where is our charity? Where is our profeſſion of godlineſs? Where is our chriſtian example? Where is our zeal for the cauſe of Chriſt? Where is our honor of fidelity between man and man? Hear ye deaf, and look ye blind. Are theſe things viſible? Are they faſhionable in all claſſes of men? Has ſin

become leſs ſinful than formerly? Is vice leſs deſtructive? Is a violation of the law, a profanation of the Sabbath, a rejection of the terms of ſalvation, leſs dangerous? Is God leſs diſpleaſed with ſin? Is the penalty of the law leſs alarming? Is ſalvation leſs inviting? Is final deſtruction leſs dreadful? If not, let us hear the call of the Apoſtle, and our pious anceſtors, though dead yet ſpeaking, to come out from the wickedneſs of the world and be ſeparate.

To prevent miſtake, by ſeparation is not here intended a ſeparation of any particular ſociety or family, or forſaking all intercourſe with the world; but a ſeparation from all moral evil, and a faithful diſcharge of chriſtian duty. Agreeably to this, are all the commands, admonitions, calls, and promiſes of the goſpel. When Chriſt calls one to be his diſciple, and to engage in the ſervice of his kingdom of holineſs, he muſt forſake the multitude that do evil, and come out of the kingdom of Satan; and return to God, to love him ſupremely, and to delight in his ſervice. This was verified by the call and conduct of St. Paul. In obedience to the call of Chriſt, he came out from the kingdom of Babylon, which is full of ſin, and manifeſted friendſhip to all the laws of God's holy kingdom. This was not peculiar to the Apoſ-

tle only. All, who have felt the work of the ſpirit on the heart, and have been convinced of ſin; all, who have felt the renewing and ſanctifying influences of the holy ſpirit; all, who obey the call of the goſpel, and love the doctrines and duties of religion, will come out of Babylon, deny themſelves, and take up the croſs. This is confirmed by the example of the primitive chriſtians, and by all the conduct of the virtuous and good. Abraham, in hearing the call of God, forſook the idols around him, and came out of the wickedneſs of the Chaldeans. He obeyed the voice of God, entered into covenant, engaged to ſerve him, and was bleſſed. This is the characteriſtic of good men in every age. They avoid the evil of ſin, as diſhonorary to God, and deſtructive to the happineſs of man; and aim to promote the glorious kingdom of the Redeemer. Our pious anceſtors were actuated by ſuch a ſpirit, in their arduous enterpriſe to plant the goſpel in this wilderneſs.

O HOW important, that we obey God, and unite in the glorious cauſe with all the redeemed of the LORD! The happineſs of man, the honor of God, the example of the godly, and our own good, call us to take an active part in the ſame cauſe. To do this, we muſt come out from the infidelity, the falſe glare, the falſe opinions, and the a-

bominations of the world. We muſt have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful wórks of darkneſs, but rather reprove them. We muſt ſeparate from ſenſual pleaſure, and touch no unclean thing. We muſt put off the old man, with his deeds which are corrupt, and put on the new man, and walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit. This would induce us to make a great ſacrifice for the cauſe of truth, to love God, to love our neighbor, and to ſeek the general good. Actuated by ſuch a ſpirit, we ſhould be delighted with the perfections of the Deity, his counſels, ways, and works. We ſhould rejoice in his plan of government, be pleaſed with the terms of ſalvation, and praiſe him for his works of grace and forgiving love. We ſhould take delight in prayer to God, and in all the duties of religion. We ſhould humbly confeſs our ſins before God, obſerve his holy commands, honor the Saviour, and walk in wiſdom's ways. Then we ſhould unite in the moſt pleaſing ſenſations, in celebrating the joyful day, on the arrival of the pilgrims. In a remembrance of God's goodneſs to them, and to us, we ſhould ſay, not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name be the glory.

But if we be an ungrateful people, if we forſake the God of our fathers, will he not viſit our

tranſgreſſions with a rod, and our iniquities with ſtripes. We have reaſon to be humble, and fear before him, under the rebukes of his righteous diſpleaſure, in the calamity which he hath lately ſent upon us for our ſins.* Nevertheleſs, he will remember his covenant people in mercy; his loving kindneſs he will not take from them, nor ſuffer his faithfulneſs to fail.

From a general view of this ſubject, we may remark,

1. The peculiar encouragement we have to diſtinguiſh ourſelves as the people of God. Every motive and argument concur, to engage our obedience and ſervice. The word and providence of God, the example and ſalvation of the ſaints, our own ſalvation, and the ſalvation of precious and immortal ſouls, call upon us to forſake all unrighteouſneſs, and practiſe holineſs in the fear of the Lord. We have a cloud of witneſſes, who obeyed the voice of God, who were pardoned, and made meet for the ſaints in light. We may imitate, we may follow after, in piety and goodneſs, and God has promiſed every needful good.

* It has been a time of great ſickneſs and mortality in the town, for ſeveral months.

Therefore we are encouraged to renounce ſin, and come out boldly from the kingdom of ſin, and the moſt happy fruits or effects would follow.

A NEW face of things would appear, in a civil and religious view. The works of evil would ceaſe, ſociety would be in the moſt peaceful and proſperous ſtate. There would be no longer reaſon to complain of injury or oppreſſion. Peace and good will would prevail; and where ſin abounds grace would ſuperabound. A multitude of guilty ſinners would be forgiven, and Chriſt would be glorified. There would be a fervor of devotion, a warmth of affection in acts of beneficence. All ſouls would unite, as brethren, to be kind, to be courteous, as children of one parent, as heirs of the ſame kingdom, redeemed by the ſame blood, and travelling to the ſame heavenly home. It would engage all deſcriptions of men, to ſtand in defence of freedom and the chriſtian religion. Rulers and people, like the pious in paſt ages, would labor to convey to the world the pure principles of the goſpel, and freedom to enjoy it. By precept and example, they would teach and inculcate, "whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things

are lovely, whatſoever things are of good report."

WHAT encouragement to come out, and ſhare in all the bleſſings of it, in time and eternity. Such a people or nation might hope, and quietly wait, to ſee the ſalvation of God. We might truſt in his government, praiſe him for his goodneſs, and plead his gracious promiſe. And he, who brought his covenant people out of Babylon to Jeruſalem; he, who led Iſrael out of Egypt to the land of Canaan; he, who brought our anceſtors to this place, would be our God, and the God of our children. In fulfilment of his holy promiſe, he would bleſs us, by ſea and land, in church and in ſtate. Then we might ſay, "how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Iſrael!"

IF one of our pious anceſtors were to addreſs us, would he not ſay, "O ye ſons of the firſt ſettlers of the old colony! Reflect on our hardſhips, our ſufferings, and our ardent deſire to promote the intereſt of Chriſt. Hear our ſupplications to the throne of grace. For you we fervently prayed. For you we planted fields and vineyards; that you might enter into our labors, be a free people, and enjoy the goſpel of God. O re-

member the goodneſs of God, which brought us hither ! How he delivered us out of many tribulations, and gave us ſucceſs.

" And ye miniſters of the ſanctuary ; ye are ſet in defence of the goſpel, to watch for ſouls, as thoſe who muſt give an account. Take heed to your miniſtry, to fulfil it. Carry our poſterity in the arms of faith to the throne of grace. Declare to them the loſt ſtate of man, and ſalvation by an infinite Saviour. Like ſcribes, well inſtructed in the kingdom of God, teach and reprove, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine, that you may be free from the blood of all men.

" And ye rulers ; conſider, by our labors and toils, that God, in infinite wiſdom, was pleaſed to make uſe of us, to prepare the way for your promotion, and to take the ſeats of honor. Remember the patience, the piety of a Carver, a Bradford, a Winſlow. Conſider their integrity and zeal for the honor of God, and the public good ; and, like them, honor the inſtitutions of the goſpel, and manifeſt benevolence in all your adminiſtrations."

To parents he might ſay ; " O ye affectionate parents ; we took our children, left our homes, bid farewell to our friends, and traverſed the flood

with them in our arms. We taught them to remember God their creator. We taught them the fear of God, the law of God, and thoſe things which are eſſential to inherit the kingdom of God. We endeavored to inſtruct them in all the principles, doctrines, obligations, and duties, to God and man. We labored to indoctrinate them in the glorious ſcheme of grace through the Redeemer, and to impreſs their minds with a conviction of ſin, and of an eternity of happineſs and miſery. And O how affecting, how ſolemn the thought, if any of your children ſhould miſs of ſalvation by your neglect! Be perſuaded, then, to bring them up for God."

In hearing our anceſtor, our feelings of gratitude are excited, in a view of God's method, which he hath taken to enlarge his kingdom. He was pleaſed to make uſe of our anceſtors, to carry on his glorious purpoſe, in ſettling the goſpel in this part of the world, where Satan's ſeat was. They were few in number, and weak in power; but they waxed ſtrong in the Lord, and were made valiant. They ſuffered on every ſide; without were fightings, within were fears. They were poor, but they made many rich in opening the way for the enjoyment of liberty, and the chriſtian religion, in a heathen land. We have riſen up, we ſtand in their lot, to reap the happy fruits of their

toils and ſufferings. We have abundant reaſon to praiſe God for the riches of his goodneſs, and to acknowledge him in all his ways.

How remarkably did God appear for us, in our American revolution! Our rights were invaded, and our country was called to arms, to contend with a potent enemy that came againſt us. God, who is infinite in power and goodneſs, heard our cries to him for help, directed our councils, gave us victory in the day of battle, and crowned our efforts with ſucceſs. He ſettled us down in peace, and eſtabliſhed our independence.

How evident is our dependence on God! What reaſon for gratitude for his ſovereign goodneſs, in continuing to us his favors. In acting for his own glory, he has ſpread the knowledge of his name among thoſe who ſat in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death. He hath repeatedly poured out his ſpirit in divers places, in the enlargement of his intereſt. And he is now ſucceeding the miſſionary cauſe, in ſpreading truth and knowledge. Amidſt all the darkneſs and oppoſition of the human heart, there is an increaſe of light. There is more chriſtian knowledge at the preſent, than in any paſt age. Many, within a few years, have been called away from their ſins, by the mighty power of God, to

act for his glory and the general good ; and ſhould God, by his power, make us ſubmiſſive to his will, we ſhould obey his voice, and come out of the evils of this ſinful world. Let us hear and obey. Delays are dangerous. All God's proffered favors may be loſt. If we live in diſobedience, under the reigning power of ſin, in the kingdom of unbelief and deluſion, he may take from us all our privileges, and give them to another nation. There is nothing worth our ſtay in Babylon. It is a devoted place. Her ways lead to deſtruction, and her ſteps take hold on hell. It becomes us to make haſte, to flee, and to come away, that iniquity may not prove our ruin.

Did our pious fathers conſider the cauſe, in which they had engaged, ſo glorious for God, and ſo happy for man, as to ſuffer in its defence ? and ſhall not we boldly labour to maintain it ? Let us tread in their footſteps, and imitate them, as far as they imitated Chriſt. Let us ſeek the good old way, and go forth in the footſteps of the flock. Let us be governed by the ſame benevolence, and walk by the rules of Chriſt's kingdom, that it may be well with us, and our children after us.

May it pleaſe a holy, ſovereign God to pour out his ſpirit upon us and all people ; and change the

reigning enmity of unholy hearts, that the kingdom of ſin may be deſtroyed, and the kingdom of Chriſt advanced. Then we might rejoice in proſpect, that the wilderneſs would bud and bloſſom as the roſe; and ſay, in the animated language of the prophet, "Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things."——*AMEN.*